

Finally, the appearance produced by these readily moveable and extraordinarily flexible parts in the protean system of filaments, as if a moving fluid substance assumed any form, or spread and poured itself into any shape, is an illusion which is set up especially by the circumstance that individual minute parts which are readily displaceable throughout can never be distinguished at their points of contact.

XLIII.—*Description of a singular Shell from Southern India, allied to Tanalia; with Remarks on a Travancore Batissa, and on the Himalayan Form Tricula.* By W. H. BENSON, Esq.

Tanalia(?) *Stomatodon*, Bens., n. sp.

T. testa ovato-globosa, solida, læviuscula (juniorum polita), striis spiralibus obsoletis induta, olivaceo-nigrescente; spira brevi erosa, sutura impressa; anfractibus 3 superstitibus, superioribus convexiusculis, ultimo convexo; apertura ovato-acuta, albida, intus demum angustiore, sinuata; peristomate integro, margine dextro basaliq̄ue acuto, columellari late calloso, infra latiore, subito intus truncato, dente prominente crasso munito.

Axis 14, lat. 12 mill.

Habitat in aquis dulcibus montium prope Cottyam, regionis Travancoriæ. Invenit D. Kohlhoff.

This very interesting shell was sent to me by Capt. Charles Annesley Benson, at whose request the discoverer had kindly searched the Travancore Hills behind Trevandrum for land and freshwater shells. Among the former was a specimen of *Helix Basileus*, Bens., larger than the type-specimen described in the *Annals of Natural History* for February 1861.



Tanalia (?)
Stomatodon.

The form now made known is a very distinct species of the Paludomoid type; and should it prove to be a *Tanalia*, as surmised by Mr. H. F. Blanford, who has carefully studied the family, it will stand as the first of the genus which has occurred out of Ceylon. Unfortunately, all the specimens were deficient in the operculum, which, when examined, may possibly authorize its transfer to a new genus, in which case the specific name may fairly be employed to designate it. In my remarks on *Clea Annesleyi*, from Quilon, in the *Ann. Nat. Hist.* for October 1860, I observed that, notwithstanding the basal emargination, *Clea*, with reference to its unguiculate operculum, would probably be found to have nearer relations with the Cingalese genus *Tanalia* than with *Melania* and its congeners. *Stomatodon* seems partly to supply one of the absent links, inasmuch as its operculum must necessarily be provided with a basal projection,

while its construction is also likely to be unguiculate. There is some resemblance in this shell to *Neritina*, for which genus a specimen might, on a cursory glance, be taken. The upper part of the columellar callosity exhibits in some specimens a blackish-brown tint, and a patch of the same colour may occasionally be observed at the base, in the interior of the aperture, the throat of which is tinged with violet and purple and presents a minutely corrugate surface.

Since the publication of *Corbicula Quilonica*, Bens., in the Ann. Nat. Hist. for October 1860, where it was described from young specimens, I have received from Capt. C. A. Benson a single large and solid example, found at the same place. It belongs to Gray's *Batissa*, a genus intermediate between *Corbicula* and *Cyrena*. The shortness of the serrulate lateral teeth was recorded in the Latin characters, and alluded to, as well as their comparative brevity on the anterior side, in the subsequent remarks as worthy of notice. The continent of India had not previously furnished any examples of *Batissa*, of which some fine species inhabit the Eastern Archipelago.

The following are the dimensions of the adult shell:—

Long. 21, lat. 34, diam. 15 mill.

In the original description of the young, the breadth was by mistake stated as 10 instead of 8 mill., and the length as 8 mill. instead of 10.

I am informed that the conchological writer, M. Brot, has, in his Catalogue of Melaniadæ (a copy of which has not yet come under my inspection), referred my minute Melaniadous *Tricula*, from the Himalaya, to the genus *Paludina*. M. Brot can scarcely have examined the subspiral operculum of the shell, or consulted the original description published in M'Clelland's 'Calcutta Journal of Natural History' for 1842; otherwise he would not have overlooked the differences presented by such an operculum from the concentric laminations of that of *Paludina*, the animal of which differs altogether from that of the mountain form, which nearly approaches that of *Melania*; while the shell of *Tricula* bears the same relation to *Melania* as that observable in the Egyptian and Syrian *Paludomus bulimoides*, Olivier, when compared with the more Eastern forms of the genus. *Tricula* occurred at an altitude of 4000 feet. It may now possibly inhabit the plains, as I placed living specimens in a pond at Moradabad.

I add an extract from the paper in the Calcutta Journal:—

“Subgenus TRICULA.

“Testæ spira elongatiuscula; apertura obliqua, ovata, integra, su-

perne angulata; peristomate continuo, subreflexo; anfractu ultimo subumbilicato.

“Animal *Melaniæ* simile, proboscide elongata, antice emarginata; tentaculis filiformibus duobus oculos postice prope basin gerentibus; pede mediocri ovato, antice subquadrato. Operculo corneo subspirali.

“*T. montana.*

“*T.* testa olivacea, ovato-conica; anfractibus sex, rotundatis, suturis impressis; apertura intus albida; peristomate nigrescente; apice obtuso, plerumque decollato.

“Hab. in rivo, apud lacum Kemaonensem Bhimtâl dictum.

“This little shell I first found adhering to the prone surface of a leaf of *Potamogeton*, in a clear and weedy stream running through a marsh at the head of Bheemtâl and supplying that lake; and subsequently Dr. Bacon and myself found it abundantly on the stems of a water Iris which we drew up by the roots from the bed of the stream for examination.”

I further remarked that it exhibited a tendency towards *Paludina* in form and in the continuity and incrassation of the peristome.

Cheltenham, Nov. 12, 1862.

XLIV.—On the Unicorn of the Ancients.

By the Rev. W. HOUGHTON, M.A., F.L.S.

To the Editors of the *Annals and Magazine of Natural History.*

GENTLEMEN,

I hasten to correct a serious error which I committed in my paper “On the Unicorn of the Ancients,” published in the last Number of your Magazine. I there stated (p. 369) that “the animal which Mr. Rüppell was told by a native existed in Africa, and which had a long straight horn growing from its forehead(?), was doubtless a Rhinoceros.” I grounded this somewhat hasty conclusion on a short paragraph that appeared in the twentieth volume of the ‘*Asiatic Journal*’ (July 1825), published the year before Rüppell’s ‘*Atlas zu der Reise im nördlichen Africa.*’ I have since referred to this work, in which, at pt. i. p. 29, Mr. Rüppell has made some observations on the Unicorn, which, under the name of *Nillekma*, is known to the natives of Kordofan. “The accounts which I obtained,” this traveller remarks (p. 30), “from persons of the greatest respectability concerning the *Nillekma* all perfectly agreed,—to wit, the animal’s hide was of a reddish colour, its size that of a pony, its form slender like the Antelope’s; the male had a long straight horn upon its brow, which was wanting in the female. Some added that it